The Gospel of Truth

Translated by Willis Barnstone and Marvin Meyer

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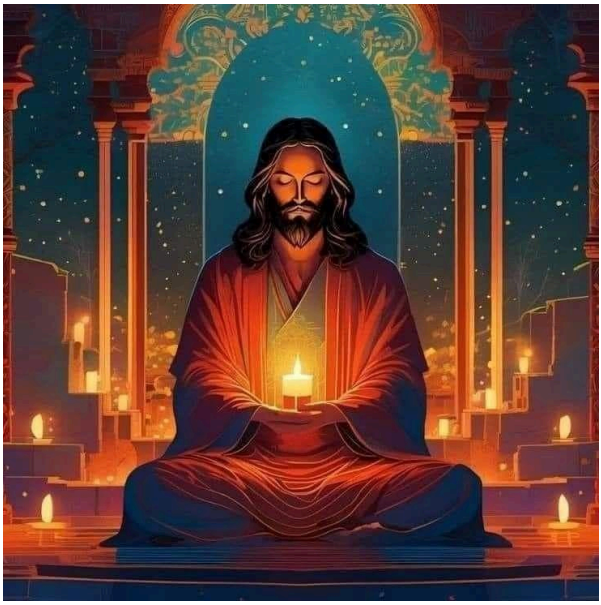
Headings in bold type have been added to the text for clarity by the translators.

JOY TO THOSE WHO KNOW THE FATHER



The gospel of truth is joy for those who have received from the father of truth the grace of knowing him by the power of the word, who has come from the fullness and who is in the thought and the mind of the father. This is the one who is called the savior, since that is the name of the work that he must do for the redemption of those who have not known the father. For the name of the gospel is the revelation of hope, since that is the discovery of those who seek him, because the realm of all sought him from whom it came. You see, all was inside of him, that illimitable, inconceivable one, who is better than every thought.

IGNORANCE OF THE FATHER BRINGS ERROR

This ignorance of the father brought about terror and fear. And terror became dense like a fog, so no one was able to see. Because of this, error became strong. But she worked on her material substance vainly, because she did not know the truth. She assumed a fashioned figure while she was preparing, in power and in beauty, the substitute for truth.

This, then, was not a humiliation for the illimitable, inconceivable one. For they were as nothing, this terror and this forgetfulness and this figure of falsehood, whereas established truth is unchanging, unperturbed, and completely beautiful.

For this reason, do not take error too seriously.

Since error had no root, she was in a fog regarding the father. She was preparing works and forgetfulnesses and fears in order, by these means, to beguile those of the middle and to make them captive. The forgetfulness of error was not revealed. It did not become light beside the father. Forgetfulness did not exist with the father, although it existed because of him. What exists in him is knowledge, which was revealed so that forgetfulness might be destroyed and that the father might be known. Since forgetfulness existed because the father was not known, if the father comes to be known, from that moment on forgetfulness will cease to exist.

JESUS IS THE FRUIT OF KNOWLEDGE

That is the gospel of him whom they seek, which he has revealed to the perfect through the mercies of the father as the hidden mystery, Jesus the anointed. Through him he enlightened those who were in darkness because of forgetfulness. He enlightened them and gave them a path. And that path is the truth that he taught them. For this reason error was angry with him, so she persecuted him. She was distressed by him, and she was made powerless. He was nailed to a tree. He became a fruit of the knowledge of the father. He did not, however, destroy them because they ate of it. He rather caused those who ate of it to be joyful because of this discovery.

And as for him, he found them in himself, and they found him in themselves, that illimitable, inconceivable one, that perfect father who made all, in whom the realm of all is, and whom the realm of all lacks, since he retained in himself their perfection, which he had not given to all. The father was not jealous. What jealousy, indeed, is there between him and his members? For, even if the eternal being had received their perfection, they would not have been able to approach the perfection of the father, because he retained their perfection in himself, giving it to them as a way to return to him and as a knowledge unique in perfection. He is the one who set all in order and in whom all existed and whom all lacked. As one of whom some have no knowledge, he wants them to know him and love him. What did they lack, if not the knowledge of the father?

JESUS AS QUIET GUIDE

Jesus became a guide, quiet and at leisure. In the middle of a school he came and spoke the word, as a teacher. Those who were wise in their own estimation came to put him to the test. But he discredited them as empty-headed people. They hated him because they really were not wise. After all these came also the little children, those who possess the knowledge of the father. When they became strong they were taught the aspects of the father's face. They came to know and they were known. They were glorified and they gave glory.

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THE LIVING BOOK IN THE HEART OF THE LITTLE CHILDREN

In their heart, the living book of the living was manifest, the book that was written in the thought and in the mind of the father and, from before the foundation of all, is in that incomprehensible part of him.

This is the book that no one found possible to take, since it was reserved for him who will take it and be slain. No one could appear among those who believed in salvation as long as that book had not appeared. For this reason, the compassionate, faithful Jesus was patient in his sufferings until he took that book, since he knew that his death meant life for many. Just as in the case of a will that has not yet been opened, the fortune of the deceased master of the house is hidden, so also in the case of all that had been hidden as long as the father of all was invisible and unique in himself, in whom every space has its source. For this reason Jesus appeared. He put on that book. He was nailed to a cross. He affixed the edict of the father to the cross.

Oh, such great teaching! He abases himself even unto death, though he is clothed in eternal life. Having divested himself of these perishable rags, he clothed himself in incorruptibility, which no one could possibly take from him. Having entered into the empty territory of fears, he passed before those who were stripped by forgetfulness, being both knowledge and perfection, proclaiming the things that are in the heart of the father, so that he became the wisdom of those who have received instruction. But those who are to be taught, the living who are inscribed in the book of the living, learn for themselves, receiving instructions from the father, turning to him again.

Since the perfection of all is in the father, it is necessary for all to ascend to him. Therefore, if one has knowledge, he gets what belongs to him and draws it to himself. For one who is ignorant is deficient, and it is a great deficiency, since he lacks that which will make him perfect. Since the perfection of all is in the father, it is necessary for all to ascend to him and for each one to get the things that are his. He wrote these things first, having prepared them to be given to those who came from him.

THE FATHER CALLING THOSE WHO HAVE KNOWLEDGE

Those whose names he knew first were called last, so that the one who has knowledge is one whose name the father has pronounced. For one whose name has not been spoken is ignorant. Indeed, how shall one hear if a name has not been uttered? For whoever remains ignorant until the end is a creature of forgetfulness and will perish with it. If this is not so, why have these wretches no name, why have they no voice? Hence, whoever has knowledge is from above. If called, that person hears, replies, and turns toward him who called. That person ascends to him and knows how he is called. Having knowledge, that person does the will of him who called. That person desires to please him, finds rest, and receives a certain name. Those who thus are going to have knowledge know whence they came and whither they are going. They know it as someone who, having become intoxicated, has turned from his drunkenness and, having come to himself, has restored what is his own.

He has turned many from error. He went before them to their own places, from which they departed when they erred because of the depth of him who surrounds every place, whereas there is nothing that surrounds him. It was a great wonder that they were in the father without knowing him and that they were able to leave on their own, since they were not able to contain him and know him in whom they were, for indeed his will had not come forth from him. For he revealed it as a knowledge with which all its emanations agree, namely, the knowledge of the living book that he revealed to the eternal beings at last as his letters, displaying to them that these are not merely vowels or consonants, so that one may read them and think of something void of meaning. On the contrary, they are letters that convey the truth. They are pronounced only when they are known. Each letter is a perfect truth like a perfect book, for they are letters written by the hand of the unity, since the father wrote them for the eternal beings, so that they by means of his letters might come to know the father.

THE FATHER'S SON IS JESUS OF UTMOST SWEETNESS

His wisdom contemplates the word,
his teaching expresses it,
his knowledge has revealed it,
his honor is a crown upon it,
his joy agrees with it,
his glory has exalted it,
his image has revealed it,
his rest has received it,

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his love has embodied it,
his trust has embraced it.

Thus the word of the father goes forth into all, being the fruit of his heart and expression of his will. It supports all. It chooses them and also takes the character of all and purifies them, causing them to return to the father, to the mother, Jesus of the utmost sweetness. The father opens his bosom, and his bosom is the holy spirit. He reveals his hidden self, which is his son, so that through the compassion of the father the eternal beings may know him, end their wearying search for the father, and rest themselves in him, knowing that this is rest. After he had filled what was incomplete, he did away with its form. The form of that which was incomplete is the world, which it served.

For where there is envy and strife, there is an incompleteness; but where there is unity, there is completeness. Since this incompleteness came about because they did not know the father, from the moment when they know the father, incompleteness will cease to exist. As one's ignorance disappears when one gains knowledge, and as darkness disappears when light appears, so also incompleteness is eliminated by completeness. Certainly, from that moment on, form is no longer manifest but will be dissolved in fusion with unity. Now their works lie scattered. In time unity will make the spaces complete. By means of unity each one will understand himself. By means of knowledge one will purify himself from multiplicity into unity, devouring matter within himself like fire and darkness by light, death by life.

BREAKING DEFECTIVE DISHES WHEN MOVING

Certainly, if these things have happened to each one of us, it is fitting for us, surely, to think about all so that the house may be holy and silent for unity. Like people who have moved from a house, if they have some dishes around that are not good, they are broken. Nevertheless, the householder does not suffer a loss but rejoices, for in the place of these defective dishes there are those that are completely perfect. For this is the judgment that has come from above and that has judged every person, a drawn two-edged sword cutting on this side and that. When the word appeared, who is in the heart of those who pronounce it—it was not merely a sound but has become a body—a great disturbance occurred among the dishes, for some were emptied, others filled; some were provided for, others were removed; some were purified, still others were broken. All the spaces were shaken and disturbed for they had no composure nor stability. Error was disturbed, not knowing what she should do. She was troubled, she lamented, she was beside herself because she did not know anything. When knowledge, which is the abolishment of error, approached her with all her emanations, error was empty, since there was nothing in her. Truth appeared; all its emanations recognized it. They greeted the father in truth with a power which is complete and which joins them with the father.

TRUTH IS THE MOUTH OF THE FATHER

Each one loves truth because truth is the mouth of the father. His tongue is the holy spirit. Whoever touches truth touches the mouth of the father by his tongue at the time when one will receive the holy spirit.

This is the manifestation of the father and his revelation to his eternal beings. He revealed what is hidden in him and explained it. For who is it who exists if it is not the father himself? All the spaces are his emanations. They knew that they stem from him as children from a perfect man. They knew that they had not yet received form, nor had they yet received a name, every one of which the father produces. If they at that time receive the form of his knowledge, though they are truly in him, they do not know him. But the father is perfect. He knows every space that is within him. If he pleases, he reveals anyone whom he desires by giving him a form and by giving him a name; and he does give a name and cause to come into being. Those who do not yet exist are ignorant of him who created them. I do not say, then, that those who do not yet exist are nothing. But they are in him who will desire that they exist when he pleases, like an event that is going to happen. On the one hand, he knows, before anything is revealed, what he will produce. On the other hand, the fruit that has not yet been revealed does not know anything nor is anything either. Thus each space that, on its part, is in the father comes from the existent one, who, on his part, has established it from the nonexistent. For whoever has no root has no fruit, but although thinking, "I have come into being," that one will perish. For this reason, whoever does not exist at all will never exist.

WAKING UP AND COMING TO KNOWLEDGE

What, then, is that which he wants such a one to think? "I am like the shadows and phantoms of the night." When morning comes, this one knows that the fear that had been experienced was nothing.

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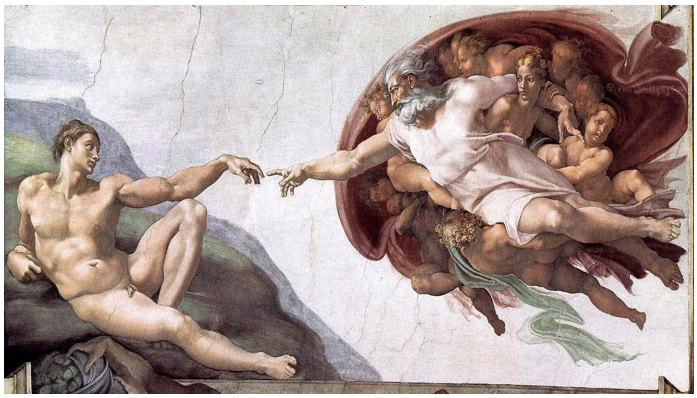
Thus they were ignorant of the father; he is the one whom they did not see. Since there had been fear and confusion and a lack of confidence and double-mindedness and division, there were many illusions that were conceived by them, as well as empty ignorance—as if they were fast asleep and found themselves a prey to troubled dreams.

Either they are fleeing somewhere, or they lack strength to escape when pursued. They are involved in inflicting blows, or they themselves receive bruises. They are falling from high places, or they fly through the air with no wings at all. Other times, it is as if certain people were trying to kill them, even though there is no one pursuing them; or they themselves are killing those beside them, and they are stained by their blood. Until the moment when they who are passing through all these things—I mean they who have experienced all these confusions—awaken, they see nothing because the dreams were nothing. It is thus that they who cast ignorance from them like sleep do not consider it to be anything, nor regard its properties to be something real, but they renounce them like a dream in the night and they consider the knowledge of the father to be the dawn. It is thus that each one has acted, as if asleep, during the time of ignorance, and thus a person comes to understand, as if awakening. And happy is the one who comes to himself and awakens. Indeed, blessings on one who has opened the eyes of the blind.

The spirit came to this person in haste when the person was awakened. Having given its hand to the one lying prone on the ground, it placed him firmly on his feet, for he had not yet stood up. This gave them the means of knowing the knowledge of the father and the revelation of his son. For when they saw it and listened to it, he permitted them to take a taste of and to smell and to grasp the beloved son.

The Son Reveals the Word of the Father-

The son appeared, informing them of the father, the illimitable one. He inspired them with that which is in the mind, while doing his will. Many received the light and turned toward him. But material people were alien to him and did not discern his appearance nor recognize him. For he came in the likeness of flesh and nothing blocked his way because what is incorruptible is irresistible. Moreover, while saying new things, speaking about what is in the heart of the father, he proclaimed the faultless word. Light spoke through his mouth, and his voice brought forth life. He gave them thought and understanding and mercy and salvation, and the spirit of strength derived from the infinity and sweetness of the father. He caused punishments and scourgings to cease, for it was they that caused many in need of mercy to stray from him in error and in chains—and he mightily destroyed them and derided them with knowledge. He became a path for those who went astray and knowledge for those who were ignorant, a discovery for those who sought, and a support for those who tremble, a purity for those who were defiled.



The Son Is the Shepherd of the One Lost Sheep

He is the shepherd who left behind the ninety-nine sheep that had not strayed and went in search of that one which was lost. He rejoiced when he had found it. For ninety-nine is a number expressed with the left hand. The moment he finds the one, however, the whole number is transferred to the right hand. Thus it is with him who lacks the one, that is, the entire right hand, which attracts that in which it is deficient, seizes it from the left side, and transfers it to the right. In this way, then, the number becomes one hundred. This is the symbol of the sound of the numbers. It is the father.

He labored even on the Sabbath for the sheep that he found fallen into the pit. He saved the life of that sheep, bringing it up from the pit that you may understand fully what that Sabbath is, you who are the children of the understanding of the heart. It is a day in which it is not fitting that salvation be idle, so that you may speak of that heavenly day that has no night and of the sun that does not set because it is perfect. Say then in your heart that you are this perfect day and that in you lives the light that does not fail.

Putting Knowledge into Practice

Speak concerning the truth to those who seek it and of knowledge to those who, in their error, have committed sins. Make sure-footed those who stumble, and stretch forth your hands to the sick. Nourish the hungry, and set at ease those who are troubled. Raise up and awaken those who sleep. You are this understanding that seizes you. If the strong follow this course, they are even stronger. Turn your attention to yourselves. Do not be concerned with other things, namely, that which you have cast forth from yourselves, that which you have dismissed. Do not return to them to eat them. Do not be moth-eaten. Do not be worm-eaten, for you have already shaken it off. Do not be a place of the devil, for you have already destroyed him. Do not strengthen your last obstacles, because that is reprehensible. For the lawless one is nothing. He harms himself more

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than the law. For that one does his works because he is a lawless person. But this one, because he is a righteous person, does his works among others. Do the will of the father, then, for you are from him.

THE SWEETNESS OF THE FATHER

For the father is sweet and his will is good. He knows the things that are yours, so that you may rest yourselves in them. For by the fruits one knows the things that are yours, that they are the children of the father, and one knows his aroma, that you originate from the grace of his countenance. For this reason, the father loves his aroma; and it manifests itself in every place; and when it is mixed with matter, he gives his aroma to the light; and into his rest he causes it to ascend in every form and in every sound. For it is not ears that smell the aroma, but it is the spirit that possesses the sense of smell and draws it for itself to itself and sinks into the aroma of the father. Thus the spirit cares for it and takes it to the place from which it has come, the first aroma, which has grown cold. It is in a psychical form, resembling cold water that has sunk into soil that is not hard, of which those who see it think, "It is earth." Afterward, it evaporates if a breath of wind draws it, and it becomes warm. The cold aromas, then, are from division. For this reason, faith came and destroyed division and brought the warm fullness of love, so that the cold may not return, but the unity of perfect thought may prevail.

THE FATHER RESTORES DEFICIENCY WITH FULLNESS

This is the word of the gospel about finding the fullness for those who wait for the salvation that comes from above. When their hope, for which they are waiting, is waiting—they whose likeness is the light in which there is no shadow—then at that time the fullness is about to come. The deficiency of matter, however, is not because of the infinity of the father, who came to give time to deficiency. In fact, it is not right to say that the incorruptible one will come in this manner. The depth of the father is profound, and the thought of error is not with him. It is a matter of falling down and a matter of being readily set upright at the discovery of the one who has come to what he would bring back.

This bringing back is called repentance. For this reason, incorruption has breathed. It followed one who has sinned, in order that he may find rest. Forgiveness is that which remains for the light in the deficiency, the word of the fullness. For the doctor hurries to the place where there is sickness, because that is the doctor's wish. The sick person is in a deficient condition but does not hide, because the doctor possesses what the patient lacks. In this manner the deficiency is filled by the fullness, which has no deficiency, and which was given in order to fill the one deficient, so that the person may receive grace. For while deficient, this person had no grace. Because of this a diminishing occurred where there is no grace. When the diminished part was restored, the person in need revealed himself as fullness. This is what it means to find the light of truth that has shone toward the person: it is unchangeable.

ANOINTING THE CHOSEN WITH THE FATHER'S MERCY

For this reason they who have been troubled speak about Christ in their midst so that they may receive restoration and he may anoint them with the ointment. The ointment is the pity of the father, who will have mercy on them. But those whom he has anointed are those who are perfect. For filled vessels are usually coated with sealing wax. But when the coating is ruined, the vessel may leak, and the cause of its defect is the lack of coating. For then a breath of wind and the power that it has can make it evaporate. But from the jar that is without defect no seal is removed, nor does it leak. But what it lacks is filled again by the perfect father.

The father is good. He knows his plantings because he is the one who has planted them in his paradise. And his paradise is his place of rest.

THE FATHER IS BEGINNING AND END

Paradise is the perfection in the thought of the father, and the plants are the words of his reflection. Each one of his words is the work of his will alone, in the revelation of his word. Since they were in the depth of his mind, the word, who was the first to come forth, caused them to appear, along with an intellect that speaks the unique word by means of a silent grace. It was called thought, since they were in it before becoming manifest. It happened, then, that the word was the first to come forth at the moment pleasing to the will of him who desired it; and it is in the will that the father is at rest and with which he is pleased. Nothing happens without him, nor does anything occur without the will of the father. But his will is incomprehensible. His will is his footstep, but no one can know it, nor is it possible for them to concentrate on it in order to possess it. But that which he wishes takes place at the moment he wishes it—even if the view does not please people before god: it is the father's will. For the father

PRAYER
for
CALMING ANXIETY
AND FINDING PEACE

Dear God,

My heart feels restless, and worries weigh me down. I confess that I try to control what only You can handle, and it leaves me weary. Today I surrender every anxious thought to You. Be my calm when fear rises, my strength when I feel weak, and my peace when life feels overwhelming. Remind me that I am never alone—you go before me, walk beside me, and hold me in Your love. Replace my fear with trust and my doubt with hope, as I rest in Your perfect peace.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.

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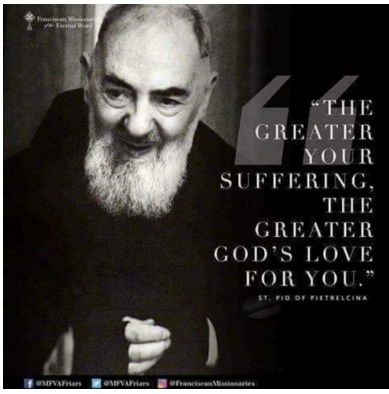
knows the beginning of them all as well as their end. For when their end arrives, he will greet them. The end, you see, is the recognition of him who is hidden, that is, the father, from whom the beginning came forth and to whom will return all who have come from him. For they were made manifest for the glory and the joy of his name.

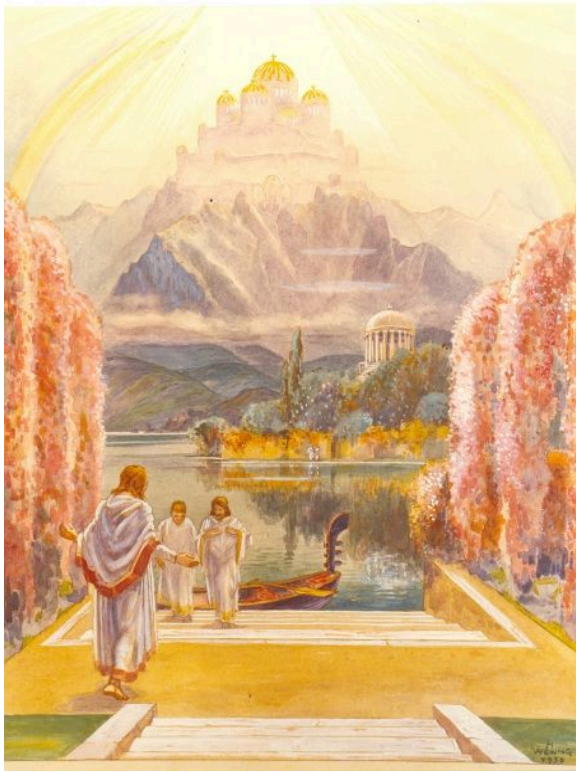
THE SON IS THE NAME AND REVELATION OF THE FATHER

The name of the father is the son. It is he who, in the beginning, gave a name to him who came from him, while he remained the same, and he conceived him as a son. He gave him his name, which belonged to him—he, the father, who possesses everything that exists around him. He possesses the name; he has the son. It is possible for the son to be seen. The name, however, is invisible, for it alone is the mystery of the invisible about to come to ears completely filled with it through the father's agency. Moreover, as for the father, his name is not pronounced but is revealed through a son. Thus, then, the name is great.



Who, then, has been able to pronounce a name for him, this great name, except him alone to whom the name belongs and the children of the name, in whom the name of the father is at rest, and who themselves in turn are at rest in his name, since the father has no beginning? It is he alone who conceived it for himself as a name, in the beginning before he had created the eternal beings, that the name of the father should be supreme over them—that is, the true name, which is secure by his authority and by his perfect power. For the name is not drawn from lexicons, nor is his name derived from common name-giving. It is invisible. The father alone gave the son a name, because he alone saw him and because he alone was capable of giving him a name. For he who does not exist has no name. For what name would one give him who did not exist? Nevertheless, he who exists exists also with his name, and he alone knows it, and to him alone the father gave a name. He is the father, his name is the son. He did not, therefore, keep it secretly hidden, but it came into existence, and the son himself disclosed the name. The name, then, is that of the father, just as the name of the father is the beloved son. For otherwise, where would he find a name except from the father? But someone will probably say to a friend, "Who would give a name to someone who existed before himself, as if, indeed, children did not receive their name from one of those who gave them birth?"

Above all, then, it is fitting for us to think this point over: what is the name? This is the true name, the name that came from the father, for it is he who owns the name. He did not, you see, get the name on loan, as in the case of others, who receive names that are made up. This is the proper name. There is no one else to whom he has given it. It remained unnamed, unuttered, till the moment when he who is perfect pronounced it himself; and it was he alone who was able to pronounce his name and to see it. When it pleased the father, then, that his son should be his pronounced name, and when he who has come from the depth disclosed this name, he divulged what was hidden, because he knew that the father was absolute goodness. For this reason, indeed, the father brought this particular one forth, that he might speak concerning the realm and his place of rest from which he had come forth, and that he might glorify the fullness, the greatness of his name and the sweetness of the father.



THE PLACE OF THE BLESSED

Each one will speak concerning the place from which they have come forth, and to the region from which they received their essential being they will hasten to return once again and receive from that place, the place where they stood before, and they will taste of that place, be nourished, and grow. And their own place of rest is their fullness. All the emanations from the father, therefore, are fullnesses, and all his emanations have their roots in the one who caused them all to grow from himself. He assigned their destinies. They, then, became manifest individually that they might be perfected in their own thought, for that place to which they extend their thought is their root, which lifts them upward through all heights to the father. They reach his head, which is rest for them, and they remain there near to it as though to say that they have touched his face by means of embraces. But they do not make this plain. For neither have they exalted themselves nor have they diminished the glory of the father, nor have they thought of him as small, nor bitter, nor angry, but as absolutely good, unperturbed, sweet, knowing all the spaces before they came into existence and having no need of instruction.

Such are they who possess from above something of this immeasurable greatness, as they strain toward that unique and perfect One who exists there for them. And they do not go down to Hades. They have neither envy nor moaning, nor is death in them. But they rest in him who rests, without

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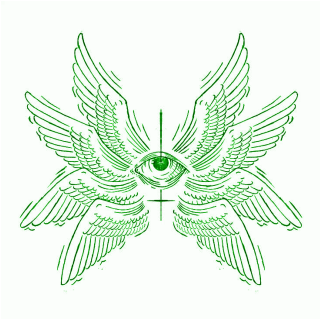
wearying themselves or becoming confused about truth. But they, indeed, are the truth, and the father is in them, and they are in the father, since they are perfect, inseparable from him who is truly good. They lack nothing in any way, but they are given rest and are refreshed by the spirit. And they listen to their root; they are busy with concerns in which one will find his root, and one will suffer no loss to his soul.

Such is the place of the blessed; this is their place. As for the others, then, may they know, in their place, that it does not suit me, after having been in the place of rest, to say anything more. It is there I shall dwell in order to devote myself, at all times, to the father of all and the true friends, those upon whom the love of the father is lavished, and in whose midst nothing of him is lacking. It is they who manifest themselves truly, since they are in that true and eternal life and speak of the perfect light filled with the seed of the father, which is in his heart and in the fullness, while his spirit rejoices in it and glorifies him in whom it was, because the father is good. And his children are perfect and worthy of his name, because he is the father. Children of this kind are those whom he loves.